

that this will not change. The time has come for restraint, without which many a common species today may be a rarity tomorrow.

“Just a short series” doubtless has wide interpretation, but whatever it may mean I believe that the traditional need for a series of more or less identical specimens, even if bred, can no longer be justified. I suggest that a pair of any species is enough to kill, and a single specimen only, preferably male, of a species known to be local or rare. What will be the reaction to this suggestion I wonder? The Royal Society for Nature Conservation’s British Wildlife Appeal slogan, “Tomorrow is too late”, is to my mind too apt to be ignored. Dr. F. H. N. SMITH, “Turnstones”, Perrancombe, Perranporth, Cornwall. TR6 OHX.

LIMNOPORUS RUFOSCUTELLATUS (HETEROPTERA: GERRIDAE)
BREEDING IN IRELAND. — A recent note by J. O’Connor (*Ent. Rec.* **98**: 34-35) reviewed the position of the gerrid *L. rufoscutellatus* in the British Isles. Only three Irish specimens had been reported prior to 1960. The scarcity of collected material and the fact that the captures (all adult) were made from March to early June, led Leston (1956) to suggest that this gerrid was a pre- or post-diapause immigrant from the Continent, which did not breed in Britain. O’Connor’s discovery of no less than 15 previously unreported specimens in the Halbert and Bullock Collections in the National Museum — 13 of them being taken from the same site in Kerry in September 1938 — suggests that breeding populations can and do exist.

On 13 August 1985, on a small pond in East Cork — (Ir. grid. ref. W940735), whilst sampling for *G. odontogaster*, two late instars of this elusive gerrid were found in a thick *Typha* band that almost completely encircled the pond. The specimens, one fourth and one fifth instar, were identified using Poisson’s key (1924). On the 17 September 1985, an adult was collected on the same pond.

Vepsalainen (1973: The distribution and habitats of *Gerris* species in Finland. *Annales Zoologici Fennici* **10**: 419-444) characterises *L. rufoscutellatus* as a common but hardly ever an abundant species in Finland; in larger ponds, there being 1 to 10 *rufoscutellatus* adults to 1000 *G. odontogaster* giving a maximum density of 0.01/m. Poisson (1924 : Contributions a l’etude des hemipteres aquatiques. *Bull. Biol. Fr. Belg.* **58** : 49-305) stated that it was less gregarious than other gerrids. It is found from March to September on ponds and lakes in France: the first imago appearing in the latter half of August. This correlates with the attempted moult to adulthood of the captured fifth instar on the 20 August 1985. O’Connor believes that intensive sampling would reveal breeding populations in the West of Ireland but the discovery of these specimens approximately 100 km East of the previously recorded cap-

ture sites, would suggest that the species is not confined to the West but indeed may occur over a much wider range.

It is hoped that further sampling in 1986 will reveal a sizeable breeding population of *L. rufoscutellatus* on this pond and that observation of this population will further our knowledge of the status of this species in Ireland — A. M. MURRAY, Department of Zoology, University College, Cork, Rep. of Ireland.

PHYLLONORYCTER DISTENTELLA (ZELLER, 1846) UNIVOLTINE IN BRITAIN. — On the 11th September, 1985 Mr. E. C. Pelham-Clinton, Dr. J. R. Langmaid and I collected mines of this species in Blean Woods, Kent and our observations show it to be univoltine. By that date the mines were fully formed and quite plentiful, but there were no examples from which moths of a first generation had emerged, as with the other oak-feeding *Phyllonorycter* which were then only just starting to make their second-generation mines. The *P. distentella* were kept under observation for the next few weeks, but there was no autumn emergence. Then, after exposing them for three months to the weather, JRL and I brought our mines indoors at the beginning of January, together with those of a few bivoltine species collected elsewhere. Moths from the latter began to emerge after two or three weeks but it was early March before the first *P. distentella* appeared, to be followed by a succession of others throughout the month. Univoltine species such as *P. roboris* (Zeller) and *P. cavella* (Zeller) show similar delay if an attempt is made to force them. According to Dr. M. R. Harper (pers. comm.), *P. distentella* likewise has only a single generation in Herefordshire.

P. distentella was added to the British list in 1886 by Wood (*Entomologist's mon. Mag.* 22: 262), who expresses no opinion on the number of generations. Meyrick in his *Handbook of British Lepidoptera* (1895) listed it as bivoltine, perhaps on the analogy of most other members of the genus. This error was followed in all subsequent British publications, including MBGBI, Vol. 2.

The adults appear in June and the larvae feed in July and August, becoming full-fed at the end of the latter month or in early September. It is not yet known whether pupation takes place in the autumn, or if the larva overwinters and changes in early spring, as is the behaviour of a small minority of *Phyllonorycter* species. A surprising absence of parasites from the Blean material may have been due to chance, but it is possible that *P. distentella* acquires some measure of immunity by its timing, the generations of the parasites being co-ordinated with the bivoltine regime of the commoner oak-feeding *Phyllonorycter*.

I take this opportunity to make a second factual correction to the section on *Phyllonorycter* in MBGBI, Vol. 2. On p.339 the mine of *P. strigulatella* (Zeller) is stated to occur on the upperside instead